

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE SANDPOINT CITY COUNCIL
November 7, 2018

OPENING Mayor Rognstad called the regular meeting of the City Council to order at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 7, 2018, in the Council chambers at City Hall, 1123 Lake Street.

ROLL CALL Council members Ruehle, Aitken, Aispuro, Williamson and Eddy were present. Councilman Darling was absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Mayor Rognstad led the Council and the public in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Mayor Rognstad read a proclamation out loud, proclaiming Family Reading Week in Sandpoint during the week of November 11 through November 17, 2018. He presented the proclamation to Suzanne Davis, Children's Librarian of the East Bonner County Library.

CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP – UPDATED SNOW REMOVAL POLICY

Mayor Rognstad recessed the regular Council meeting and convened into a Council workshop at 5:34 p.m.

Public Works Director Amanda Wilson stated that the current snow removal policy is to mobilize snow removal at two inches to four inches of snowfall. All designated employees are mobilized at 2:00 a.m. and work until all the streets are plowed. The crew utilizes the snow gates at driveways and around parked vehicles. The current on-street parking policy has an odd and even rotation.

Actions taken immediately to reach the goal to proactively respond are to convert four temporary positions into two full time positions, procure an additional loader for downtown bulb outs, optimized responsibilities between the Streets Department and Parks Department and develop an operations plan. One of the key components of an operation plan is to establish performance measures. The average cost for snow removal last winter was approximately \$1,700 per mile, with a total cost of approximately \$175,000. Fifty-eight inches per winter season is a typical snow fall, and snow removal costs an average of \$2,300 per mile. These costs include staff labor, materials and contracted services. Performance measures will include employee satisfaction, citizen satisfaction, number of incidents, time to provide passable streets and the annual cost per mile. There is an opportunity to utilize a tracking system to show where snow plows are and where they have plowed.

Amanda Wilson proposed revising priority streets to Priority 1, 2 and 3, in that order. We currently do not have enough resources to provide the same level of service on every street in town. If more snow falls while the crew is working on priority 3, than priority 1 prevails. We currently have twelve employees who will work the normal day shifts Monday through Friday but the proposal is to add one crew on "snow call". The snow call crew will be a crew of four people with a total of three snow call crews that will rotate every week. The snow call crew will be dispatched when snow is forecast, as proactive preparedness. The Parks Department will be responsible for snow removal on all pathways and sidewalks. The proposed policy will include that there will be a twelve hour maximum work shift and

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ten hours off between shifts.

Amanda Wilson reviewed a spreadsheet that provides the plan per event type, based on minor, moderate, major and emergency snowfalls and includes what type of equipment will be used, how long it will take and if additional resources will be needed. A request for proposal was recently posted for on-call snow removal services. She reviewed the map reflecting priority streets, pathways and parking lots. Pathways and City parking lots are shaded in blue and school locations are depicted on the map. Priority 1 streets shaded in yellow are primarily arterials with the highest volume of trips per day or on a route near schools. Priority 2 is shaded in green and is composed of streets within the downtown core, and Priority 3, shaded in red, are residential streets.

The City currently plows 13 City parking lots and 18 pathways and sidewalks. Residents and business owners are responsible for clearing snow on sidewalks adjacent to their home and business. The City clears sidewalks that are adjacent to City owned property. The City has 105 miles of public streets within the three priorities combined. Pathways and sidewalks will also be categorized by priority. Priority A is pathways on Division Avenue, Pine Street and the Sand creek Trail up to the Cedar Street Bridge. Priority B is sidewalks at Community Hall, Bridge Street walking bridge, the downtown parking lot and the Community Trail from Sandpoint to city limits toward the City of Dover, Priority C is sidewalks at the Jeff Jones Town Square, the Larch Street roundabout and Travers Park and Priority D is all other pathways and sidewalks.

Street Supervisor Chet Jackman stated that, currently, two employees are solely responsible for plowing City parking lots then assist in plowing the downtown core. City crew averages ten to twelve hours per shift but have worked a maximum of 16 hours when there is up to 18 inches of snow. Pathways and lots will be plowed after Priority 1 and Priority 2 areas are plowed, but the City will use resources when available during substantial snow falls. Amanda Wilson added that the only time snow removal will be done in the downtown core are the hours between 2:00 a.m. through 6:00 a.m. The intent is to have coverage except during the hours of 4:00 p.m. through 10:00 p.m., unless the snow call crew is needed. There are twelve employees dedicated to operate snow removal equipment, but there are three additional employees from the Parks and Recreation Department, if needed. The request for proposal is due on Thursday, November 15, for contracted services.

Amanda Wilson noted the top four priority lots to plow are the downtown City parking lot, the Idaho Transportation Department lot located west of Fifth Avenue, the Selkirk Loop parking lot and the City Hall parking lot. **Mayor Rognstad** suggested that the Jeff Jones Town Square also be a priority. Amanda Wilson noted that the City can't hire additional seasonal employees for snow removal because we need to balance employees with the amount of snow removal equipment available. The City did not budget to hire additional staff. The equipment used for Priorities 1 and 2 are also used for Priority 3 streets. The City will still provide the same service but it may not occur as quickly as it has in the past. She pointed out, based on population, the City of Sandpoint utilizes more resources than other local municipalities that have a much larger population. Kevin Kluender commented

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that there will be an improvement on services for those on the Priority 1 and Priority 2 streets, but those who reside on Priority 3 streets will have a decrease in services. Amanda Wilson reported that the City of Fort Collins, Colorado, has received awards for their snow removal services, and they don't plow residential streets until they are impassable. All communities have a different expectation level. **Councilman Aispuro** felt the proposed snow removal policy will be a step in the right direction. Amanda Wilson noted that the Idaho Transportation Department changed their policy last year in order to be more proactive every time there's a snowfall.

Amanda Wilson reviewed several cities that were part of their research on how they handle on-street parking. She reported that not allowing parking on the streets during the winter is the most common approach. The proposal is to allow street parking on one side of the street only. Chet Jackman stressed that it's difficult to maneuver snow removal equipment when vehicles are parked on both sides of the street. He reported that people prefer to park on the street rather than parking in their garages because it's difficult to drive over the snow berm in their driveway in the morning. Police Chief Corey Coon said there have been challenges with residents misunderstanding where to park on the odd and even rotation.

Amanda Wilson said the challenges with the eastside pathway along Division Avenue is it's not a standard sidewalk with a minimal right of way. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee reviewed the issues with clearing this pathway. They looked at an option not to do anything or move the snow to the center of Division Avenue and haul the snow. This would be a substantial cost increase and would take more time. The third option is to hire a contractor to plow the pathway or enforce residents to clear the pathway. There are challenges with enforcing residents to clear the pathway. The issue with putting the snow on the adjacent property is because there will be too much salt and crushed rock put on the property owners' yards. Discussion ensued regarding the concern that it's important to make sure there's a clear path for school students to walk to school. Amanda Wilson said staff will look at options, particularly where to put the snow so that it doesn't block the sidewalks.

Steve Holt suggested that snow on the east side of Division Avenue be stored within the green strip. Amanda Wilson said, in this case, we would lose the bike lane and the turn pocket. In order to prevent this issue, the snow will need to be hauled off. **Councilman Eddy** said he isn't optimistic that property owners will clear their sidewalks. He suggested that the schools provide education to students on what sidewalks are safer to walk on.

Amanda Wilson said the proposal is to utilize snow gates for driveways only. Using the gates around vehicles takes a tremendous amount of staff time. Driveways will be plowed with snow gates after four inches of snow. A comment was made from the public that the school district needs to provide crossing guards for students who cross Division Avenue when using the pathway along the west side of Division Avenue.

Mayor Rognstad reconvened into the regular Council meeting at 6:55 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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City Clerk Maree Peck announced that the next City Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 20, instead of the regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, November 21, due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

Councilman Eddy thanked everyone for their civic duty in voting at the polls yesterday.

Councilwoman Ruehle said she received a complaint from a citizen on the trees installed on Cedar Street. She has the understanding that the trees were to be four inches in diameter. Public Works Director Amanda Wilson replied that the trees were specified at a maximum of 2½ inches in diameter, but, due to the availability of the tree species, the Tree Committee approved decreasing the diameter of the tree to 1½ inches. There is a one-year warranty on the trees.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Councilman Aitken moved that items A-1 through C be approved. **Councilman Eddy seconded the motion.**

A roll call vote resulted as follows:

Councilwoman Ruehle	Yes
Councilman Aitken	Yes
Councilman Aispuro	Yes
Councilman Darling	Absent
Councilwoman Williamson	Yes
Councilman Eddy	Yes

The motion passed by a unanimous vote of Council present.

A. MINUTES

A-1 City Council regular minutes of October 17, 2018

A-2 Parks and Recreation Commission minutes of July 17, 2018

A-3 Historic Preservation Commission minutes of September 18, 2018

B. Bills in the total amount of \$677,901.37 for regular payables.

C. Connie's Café Freestanding Sign – Historic Sign Status

OLD BUSINESS

D. DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION UPDATE

Public Works Director Amanda Wilson noted that a meeting was held at the Little Panida Theater, with approximately 50 business owners in attendance to discuss their concerns about the impacts of the next phase of the downtown revitalization project. The project will entail reconstructing First Avenue, from Church Street to Cedar Street, at Second Avenue, from storefront to storefront, similar to the construction on Cedar Street. The project will have a featured intersection at Main Street with bulb outs at Second Avenue, Church Street and mid-blocks, stormwater swales. It will also include trees, lighting, benches and bike racks. Several concerns were raised by downtown businesses that include limited access to businesses, location of portable toilets, dust and a reduction in sales during the peak

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season from May through September.

The original construction project was to occur from Cedar Street at Second Avenue to south of Bridge Street on First Avenue from May through October 2019. Based on business owner concerns, the project has been revised to delay the start of construction after Labor Day 2019. Curb to curb construction is to be completed by October 31, 2019. There will be a reduction in the scope to enable a compressed schedule by ending the project north of Church Street and not including Bridge Street. Sidewalks will be installed using asphalt or concrete, depending on winter conditions, to be completed by November 26, 2019, and all work will be completed by the Lost in the 50s event in 2020. Contractors approached with this idea felt this was practical with a constructability perspective.

Amanda Wilson reviewed the preliminary schedule that will reduce impacts by having earlier completion incentives and allows 24/7 construction in September and October 2019. There was discussion to provide better signage that businesses are open. Next steps are to finalize design which is 50% complete. Staff will work on the contract terms and cost estimates. Public meetings will be held early spring 2019, will advertise and award the project in June 2019 and hold a public meeting in August 2019 with an updated schedule.

Councilwoman Ruehle suggested installing signage at the entrance to Sandpoint to let travelers know downtown businesses will be open. She raised concern with the timeline. Amanda Wilson noted that staff reached out to several contractors to ask when would be the latest to bid the project, with a suggestion that it not be later than May. A request for proposal will be posted in March 2019 in order to have a contract signed no later than June 2019. **Councilman Eddy** raised concern that delaying the project over a two-year construction season will cause an increase in construction costs. He said there will also be issues with an asphalt plant having the ability to be open when the weather is cold. Amanda Wilson agreed but there is a tough balance. It will reduce the impacts to downtown businesses, but there will be cost implications for the City. She realizes that an asphalt path will be sacrificial, which will be factored into the cost and risk. **Councilwoman Williamson** raised concern that there will be loud noise during the evening hours during the 24/7 construction. Amanda Wilson said there's a challenge for contractors to complete the work prior to October 31, although the duration of the project will decrease.

Steve Holt, non-Sandpoint resident, suggested finishing each block, including landscaping, prior to moving onto the next block, except paving, so that it feels like a finished block. This did not occur with the Cedar Street project.

NEW BUSINESS

E. REQUEST REMOVAL OF RIGHT OF WAY TREE AT 502 SUPERIOR STREET

Planning and Economic Development Director Aaron Qualls noted that the Tree Committee denied the request, but the City's Urban Forester recommends approving removal of the tree. The homeowner wants to have a twelve-foot-wide driveway, although the plan demonstrates a ten-foot driveway between the trees. Installing a twelve-foot driveway

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could be a potential risk to both trees. Current City standards require one tree every 25 feet, with a maximum of four trees, but there are currently seven trees within the right of way. The reason that the Tree Committee denied the request is because there was no evaluation during the building permit stage. There is no requirement to have a delineation of street trees during the building permit stage, although City staff is considering that this is required. City staff is currently developing an updated tree policy to coincide with City Code.

Dave Mundell, property owner, distributed a copy of a letter from Tom Runa, landscape architect, to City Council, with his suggestion that the tree be removed. The concern with installing a driveway between two older trees is that it would damage the roots of the trees, therefore killing two trees rather than removing one tree.

Councilwoman Ruehle moved that City Council approve recommendation from City staff to remove the right of way tree at 502 Superior Street. **Councilman Aispuro seconded the motion.**

A roll call vote resulted as follows:

Councilman Darling	Absent
Councilwoman Williamson	Yes
Councilman Eddy	Yes
Councilwoman Ruehle	Yes
Councilman Aitken	Yes
Councilman Aispuro	Yes

The motion passed by a unanimous vote of Council present.

F. TERRORISM COVERAGE

Councilman Aispuro moved that City Council deny terrorism coverage. **Councilman Eddy seconded the motion.**

A roll call vote resulted as follows:

Councilwoman Williamson	Yes
Councilman Eddy	Yes
Councilwoman Ruehle	Yes
Councilman Aitken	Yes
Councilman Aispuro	Yes
Councilman Darling	Absent

The motion passed by a unanimous vote of Council present.

G. RESOLUTION NO. 18-52 – ADDENDUM TO AGREEMENT TO GRANT EUREKA INSTITUTE LICENSED ACCESS TO CITY PROPERTY ON BALDY MOUNTAIN ROAD FOR DISC GOLF COURSE

Steve Holt, Executive Director of the Eureka Institute, thanked City Council and City staff for working with the Eureka Institute in constructing the disc golf course on the Baldy Mountain Road property. He said the project has been an overwhelming success, with approximately 100,000 visitors to date. The City purchased the property for a new

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Wastewater Treatment Plan facility, but City Council recently decided to renovate the current facility. He said there was a recent meeting between Kaniksu Land Trust, Councilwoman Williamson and the City Administrator to discuss the City's plan to dispose of the property. Kaniksu Land Trust is currently interested in purchasing the property. He requested City Council direct City staff to allow the Eureka Institute to have additional time in order to raise the funds to purchase the property. He stressed it's a huge community asset to retain open space.

John Gaddis, Secretary of the Sandpoint Disc Golf Association, added they have had 20 plays per day during the winter season and 70 plays per day during the summer months. He stressed that the disc golf course is an incredible value to the community. He commented that he hopes that the LOR Foundation will help create the opportunity for the course to remain on the property.

Councilwoman Williamson moved that City Council approve the proposed resolution, Addendum to Agreement to Grant Eureka Institute Licensed Access to City Property on Baldy Mountain Road for Disc Golf Course. **Councilman Eddy seconded the motion.**

A roll call vote resulted as follows:

Councilwoman Ruehle	Yes
Councilman Aitken	Yes
Councilman Aispuro	Yes
Councilman Darling	Absent
Councilwoman Williamson	Yes
Councilman Eddy	Yes

The motion passed by a unanimous vote of Council present.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Shelby Rognstad, Mayor

ATTEST:

Maree Peck, City Clerk